

TRIMMING THE FORCE



photo by Tech. Sgt. Larry Simmons

I enjoy reading your magazine. I work in the Air Force Reserve Command as NCO in charge of the command retention branch. I read the article “Trimming the Force” in Airman magazine (Spring 2007) with great expectation. I eagerly read as the author discussed the quality Airmen the Air Force is releasing from active duty. Then I got to the end of the article and the letdown I experienced was saddening. The quotes throughout the article were from Airmen who did not want to separate. I know the Reserve has a home for separated Airmen. But not once was the Reserve, or Guard for that matter, mentioned. As a support force for those on active duty, I at least expected us to get an honorable mention. That did not happen. What a shame to miss a great opportunity to show total force participation.

Raymond Henson
Air Force Reserve

A DEADLY JOB



photo by Tech. Sgt. Larry Simmons

I appreciate your story about the explosive ordnance disposal instructors (“Airman extreme,” Summer 2007). This has to be one of the deadliest jobs there is. The threat is bad enough, even with the current knowledge of improvised explosive devices. And insurgents keep coming up with new ways to defeat our disarming methods. I’m the proud grandfather of an EOD instructor at Eglin Air Force Base, Fla. I know he’s always concerned that he has taught his students all he possibly can to protect themselves and others. Thanks again for the great story.

Master Sgt. Lanny R. Ames
Air Force retired



photo by Tech. Sgt. Larry Simmons

UNCOMMON AIRMEN

Wonderful story about the Air Force’s unsung heroes (“Uncommon Airmen,” Summer 2007). I didn’t know these brave guys existed. I constantly try explaining to civilians that the U.S. military carries out operations every day, all over the world, that they never see on CNN. It’s those nameless, unknown warriors that we should keep in mind as we enjoy our day-to-day life here in the great USA.

Staff Sgt. Renee Running Deer
Texas Air National Guard
Lackland Air Force Base, Texas

As a veteran of the 8th Aerial Port Squadron’s mobility operations branch in Vietnam in 1970, we were some of the few Airmen who worked side by side with the Army during that era. The closest thing we had to a tactical air control party member or joint terminal attack controller was our combat control teams, or CCTs. Typically these were two guys with a jeep and a trailer and a bunch of radios. They would accompany us on our missions to the remote dirt runways and handle communications with our aircraft while we handled loading and unloading the (mostly) C-130 Hercules aircraft that



photo by Tech. Sgt. Larry Simmons

flew into and out of these jungle airstrips. But I must say that I am impressed with the training these TACP and JTAC go through today. Most of us got our combat training as on-the-job training — in actual combat with the Viet Cong. It makes me proud of the Airmen of the 21st century, and proud of the part we played in proving the concept of air mobility and cross-branch integration with the Army, which was a pretty new concept at the time. If anyone would care to learn about how things were way back when in Vietnam, we have a small Web site [http://8thmob.org] about our teams, our unit and the Airmen who served in them.

Alan Runfeldt
8th Aerial Port Squadron,
Vietnam, 1970

I spent 20 years in the Air Force, from 1962 to 1982. The “Uncommon Airmen” — out there working with the Army in battlefield situations — are truly the bravest of the brave. What they are doing is above and beyond commendable. My hat goes off to them. May God protect them and their Army comrades.

George
Retired Air Force master sergeant

AIRMEN ARE WARRIORS

I’m so glad we still have people who want to become good Airmen (“The warrior ethos,” Summer 2007). You get a great feeling when you have completed your training at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, and know you are going on to some strange duty station. You might be a stranger when you arrive at your new station, but that won’t last long. Seems like everyone wants to welcome you and make you a better Airman and a top-notch citizen. So to all of you drill sergeants: Keep up the good work so our Air Force will always be the best in the world.

Barry Grimm
Basic Training Class of 1957

The Air Force was quite different when I joined in 1971. I’m glad to see that with today’s situations around the globe that the men and women of the Air Force are training to combat those threats. With the never-ending changes in the world today, we can count on the Air Force to combat the enemy — anytime, anywhere and anyhow. Keep up the good work. Thanks for being there.

Staff Sgt. Daniel Pruden
Civil Engineers, 1971 to 1979

GET THE PICTURE

I read with great interest the responses on the new uniform (Airmail, Summer 2007) about the creases in the uniform in the picture and how the photo set a new standard. The one thing I noticed was how many of the complaints came from senior NCOs. Come on! A picture is not a written policy. But jumping to conclusions is the way some people operate. I like the look of the new uniform. And, as usual, it will take time to work out some of the details of its wear. I hope Air Force Instruction 36-2903, *Dress and Personal Appearance of Air Force Personnel*, still sets the standard and not the Army and Air Force Exchange Service catalog, or a photo. We’re taught to lead by example. Well then, show your Airman how the uniform looks on you. And read your policy and instructions. The uniform will look how it is supposed to look. A picture may be worth a thousand words, but read the words first — then you’ll understand the picture better.

Master Sgt. Bryan Harlow
Oklahoma City, Okla.

HAVE A COMMENT?

E-mail us at editor@afnews.af.mil.



“There’s another clogged toilet in the dorms. Let’s see, I wonder who the lucky Airman is?”

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